

Roger Johnson  
Agriculture Commissioner  
www.agdepartment.com



Phone (701) 328-2231  
Toll Free (800) 242-7535  
Fax (701) 328-4567

600 E Boulevard Ave., Dept. 602  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0020

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The numbers tell the story: North Dakota's 30,000 family farmers and ranchers are among the very best in the world. They lead the nation in the production of many important commodities including all wheat, durum wheat, spring wheat, barley, canola, oil and confectionary sunflowers, flaxseed, all dry edible beans, dry peas, navy beans, pinto beans, lentils, oats and honey. They rank third in sugarbeets and fourth in potatoes.

The increasing interest in and demand for renewable energy has raised our state's ranking in soybean and corn production to ninth and thirteenth, respectively.

These numbers and much more can be found here in the 2008 edition of *North Dakota Agricultural Statistics*. The numbers persuasively demonstrate the vitality and diversity of North Dakota agriculture, as well as the skill and determination of our farmers and ranchers.

These statistics are a valuable tool for producers in making planting and marketing decisions. They also provide agribusinesses, investors and policymakers with the information and historical perspective to make decisions that help the entire agriculture industry more effectively meet future challenges and issues. As agriculture commissioner and as a third-generation family farmer, I depend on this valuable resource.

The North Dakota Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service – administration, statisticians, technicians, enumerators and clerical staff – have again done an outstanding job in providing our state, and most especially its family farmers and ranchers, with this statistical portrait of North Dakota's predominant industry.

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture is proud to support the mission and work of the USDA, NASS, North Dakota Field Office and is pleased to help bring you *North Dakota Agricultural Statistics 2008*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson".

Roger Johnson  
Agriculture Commissioner

